



News Release

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Summer fun can land kids in the emergency room

Injury prevention for kids the focus of Safe Kids Day, May 18 and all year long

OLYMPIA — Kids wait all year for spring and summer to bring the longer days and warmer weather that's now here, but that fun can lead to a trip to the doctor or even the emergency room. A few common safety precautions can keep the action fun and avoid possible serious injuries, and this week the precautions are the focus of [Safe Kids Day](#), May 18.

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission says bicycle accidents crash-land more kids into emergency rooms than any other sporting activity. Children between the age five and 14 are injured more often than bikers of any other age. Sometimes these injuries can be fixed with a simple bandage at home, but many times it's much more serious – broken bones or concussions.

In Washington, one child dies or is hospitalized every day because of a preventable injury. This has an immeasurable, lasting effect on families and our community. Many of these tragedies can be prevented if children wear helmets while biking, rollerblading, or skateboarding; wear life jackets while out in or near the water; and ride in a properly installed car seat.

Accidents happen when least expected. Wearing an approved and [properly fitted](#) bicycle helmet reduces the risk of brain injury by 88 percent. As kids get older helmet use goes down. The 2012 Healthy Youth Survey reports 59 percent of eighth graders in our state who rode a bicycle in the past month rarely or never wore a helmet.

[Safe Kids Washington](#) works to promote safe biking, water sports, and car seat use, among other safety tips that help prevent injuries. It supports 18 county-based Safe Kids coalitions that serve 95 percent of children up to 14 years old in Washington. Proper helmet use, water safety advice that includes using personal floatation devices, and proper installation of child car seats are common prevention tools promoted by Safe Kids Washington and the Department of Health.

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In 2012, local [Safe Kid coalitions in our state](#) distributed more than 900 car seats and 6,000 bike helmets to local families in need.

Other lesser-known tips are available through [Safer in 7](#), and information on [Safe Kids Coalitions](#) in our state can be found on the [Department of Health](#) website. An example of a less common safety tip: jiggle a child car seat; if it moves more than an inch, it must be tightened.

The [Washington State Safe Kids Coalition](#) invites parents to take part in *Safe Kids Day* on Saturday, May 18. Local coalitions are holding several events across the state to help parents learn ways to keep kids.

The [Department of Health website](#) (doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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